

ADULT LEARNING CENTER OPENS AT ROSEVILLE COMMONS



Carmen Vega walks to her seat in an English as a Second Language class offered at the recently opened New Community Adult Learning Center on Orange Street in Newark.

Carmen Vega knows she has a purpose in life and that God has kept her here to fulfill it. She worked only a block from the World Trade Center cleaning offices, but was not in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001 when terrorists struck.

"I was home sick in bed," said Vega, 32, who had just arrived in the United States a few months earlier from Ecuador and did not speak a word of English.

Today, Vega is enrolled as a student in New Community Corporation's newly opened Adult Learning Center, located inside the Roseville Commons residential complex in Newark's West Ward. The single mother of a 7-year-old daughter is taking a course in English as a Second Language, as she realizes the importance of being able to speak the language fluently.

Currently, Vega admits she strug-

gles to help her daughter with homework and often has to go to the computer to obtain a translation.

"I want to learn English so I can eventually become an English teacher with a government position back home," explained Vega, who now works in a perfume factory.

Cristhian Barcelos, director of the center, said Vega is very motivated when it comes to achieving her goal.

"Like all of our students, she wants a better life and is determined to succeed. We are glad the center is playing a key role in helping her get to where she wants to be," he said.

The Adult Learning Center is located on the first floor of the five-story Roseville Commons building and also offers courses in Citizenship, Basic and Intermediate Level Computers and Touch Typing. Other services

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Self-Sacrifice

"Self-sacrifice is the real miracle out of which all the reported miracles grow."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Behold, I do not give lectures or a little charity, when I give I give myself."

Walt Whitman

"The happiest people I have known have been those who gave themselves no concern about their own souls, but did their uttermost to mitigate the miseries of others."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

"Loyalty means nothing unless it has at its heart the absolute principle of self-sacrifice."

Walt Whitman

"Gentleness, self-sacrifice and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion."

Mohandas Gandhi

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Adult Learning Center, cont'd....

offered by the center include:

- English Conversational Groups
- Nutrition
- Day Care (for qualifying students)
- Financial Literacy
- Health related services, including pap smears, mammograms, prostate screenings, physicals, blood tests, flu shots, HIV testing and RESPIRA Asthma training.

To reach the center, please call 973 558-5536.

NEW COMMUNITY ATTRACTING DIVERSE GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS



Christopher Certa, right, a Rutgers University student, helps out a client with a job search at New Community's Family Resource Success Center.

Laura Gresham, right, a Wells Fargo volunteer, with Ozella Williams, a participant in New Community's Adult Medical Day Care Program.

Christopher Certa is a social work major at Rutgers University in Newark, while Laura Gresham works as a commercial lines account assistant for Wells Fargo insurance company. Both have something in common: they recently volunteered their time working at New Community Corporation as a way of giving back.

"Initially, I didn't know what to expect, but knew about all the great services NCC provided," said Certa, 48, who has been working at NCC's Family Resource Success Center in the Pathmark Shopping Center on Bergen Street. "It's a great learning opportunity and way of serving the community," he added.

Interest from persons wanting to volunteer at New Community is on the rise, with a steady stream of volunteer inquiries pouring into the NCC Website weekly.

Not only did Gresham volunteer at NCC's Adult Medical Day Care program, but other colleagues from Wells Fargo did as well. Company workers who expressed an interest in

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SPECIAL BIRTHDAY MASS FOR MONSIGNOR LINDER



Caption: Monsignor greets parishioners during the special mass of thanksgiving celebrating his 75th birthday.

More than 500 guests, friends and family turned out for a special celebratory birthday mass last month for Monsignor William J. Linder, the pastor of St. Rose of Lima Church in Newark and founder, president and CEO of New Community Corp.

The service, at the request of Monsignor, featured musical selections from the "Mary Lou Williams Jazz Mass." The late jazz pianist, composer and arranger was a "personal friend" of the Monsignor and she also worked with artists like Dizzy Gillespie and Benny Goodman.

Monsignor, who turned 75 on June 5, reflected on his nearly 50 years in the ministry, including his first appointment as the pastor of Queen of Angels Church in Newark.

"I have been especially blessed by the people around me," he said. "I wouldn't be a priest today."

Monsignor's homily, focusing on the formation of the early church and taken from the book of Acts, stressed that one should expect opposition when doing the work of God, just as the apostles did. But there is joy, he said, in knowing that through persecution one is sharing in the suffering of Jesus Christ.

"You are showing your love by sharing in that sacrifice. It's a very simple message, a very hopeful message. It's a message of love," Monsignor said.

Following the mass, guests were invited to a reception in the yard behind the St. Rose rectory, where they enjoyed fellowship with the Monsignor and each other.

"He's a regular guy, a good man and very hard working," said Fred Raffa of Mountainside, a former New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency finance director.

DIVERSE VOLUNTEERS, CONT'D...



Volunteers from the Catholic Heart Workcamp are seen working in the community room of New Community's senior building known as Douglas Homes in Newark.

working with children were assigned to NCC's Community Hills Early Learning Center.

"They did a great job in assisting wherever they were needed," said Tawanna Brown, site director at Community Hills.

Danielle Bouie, a junior at St. Vincent Academy, a private, Catholic high school in Newark, also recently gave of her time at Community Hills, one of two early childhood facilities operated by NCC.

"I really like working with kids," she said as she helped a youngster with her jacket just before recess.

According to NCC's Chief Financial Officer Carlos Rivera, the thousands of hours of service provided by volunteers each year provides a cost-effective means of furthering the mission of NCC while providing an opportunity for volunteers to give back to their communities.

"With the recent cutbacks that we've seen in government programs and from private funders, the role that volunteers have played to support programs and services of



Danielle Bouie, who will be entering her senior year at Saint Vincent Academy in Newark this fall, helps Zahna Holton with her jacket just before recess at NCC's Community Hills Early Learning Center.

Auto Grad Howard Thornton

As far back as he can remember, Howard Thornton has been surrounded by automobiles.

"My father was a mechanic and my step dad," he said. "I pretty much grew into it."

A recent graduate of NCC's Youth and Adult Automotive Training Center program, Thornton is now working at Goodyear Brake-o-Rama in Elizabeth. He does everything from engine replacements and transmission repairs to working on radiators and axles.

"There's no job that can't be done," he said. "I'm always looking to get the job done. You just have to be motivated and be willing to learn and do the work."



NCC has become invaluable to our continued success," he said.



Students from UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School's New Moms Program volunteer their time at New Community's Harmony House transitional living facility, talking to new mothers about health issues. Pictured from left are students Christie Buonpane, Prasanthi Yesavorthy and Carolyn Certo.

Sharon Pleasant-Jones



Walking home one Sunday morning from church, Sharon Pleasant-Jones recalls in vivid detail her father relaying his dreams of wanting to become a physician.

“He attended college for one year, but withdrew after marrying my Mom and the (12) children started to arrive,” she explained. “I was so moved by his compassion to lay aside his dreams to take care of all of us, that I wanted his dream to come true through my life.”

Pleasant-Jones, a native of Jersey City, was only 18 when that conversation took place, but from that day on she made up her mind to pursue a career in nursing.

Today, she is sharing her skills and compassion with New Community, where she recently came aboard as the Director of Health and Social Services. As part of

her job, she renders medical care to tenants residing in all eight of NCC’s senior buildings, located in Newark, Orange and Jersey City. She monitors blood pressure and blood sugar levels, checks medications and recommends services and interventions such as home health aides or nursing home placement when appropriate.

The goal is to establish a continuum of care for seniors that seamlessly transitions them from one healthcare service to another, all within the NCC network.

“Providing a continuum of care is so crucial to the elderly so that their transition from independence to interdependence to dependence on others for care can be as seamless as possible,” Pleasant-Jones explained. “One must first establish a rapport with them and

reassure the elderly that one has their best interest at heart, and that they are safe in our care. Most importantly, we are here to assist and support them, no matter what they are facing.”

She said a kind word, a gentle touch, just listening or helping educate seniors on medical issues elicits a lot of appreciation.

Before joining NCC, Pleasant-Jones worked at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School as the Senior Nurse for Student Health Services/Family Medicine. From 1997-2001, she held the position of Nurse Manager of Family Medicine at the medical school.

Pleasant-Jones, 54, a widow, earned her Bachelor’s of Science in nursing in 2006 through a joint program run by UMDNJ and Ramapo College. She has also taken master-level studies in Nurse Practitioner. She had previously earned an associates degree in nursing in 1982 from Essex County College and an LPN diploma in 1975 through the Jersey City Board of Education.

She knows she was born to help others, noting she was delivered through an emergency C-Section at seven months when her mother’s pregnancy ran into complications.

“As my mother affectionately says, I am her ‘meant-to-be’ seventh child. The doctors told my family I would not survive the delivery so they had the entire church praying for my arrival. Being a ‘meant-to-be’ child has really brought me through some dark days,” she said.

OUR MISSION

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